

# *Sipha maydis* Passerini: A NEW GRASS/CEREAL APHID IN NORTH AMERICA

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In October 2007, a nursery detection survey sample of aphids on *Leymus condensatus* (Giant wild rice) was submitted to the Plant Pest Diagnostic Center at CDFA. It contained a mixture of adult apterae, nymphs and alates of two species: *Sipha flava* (Forbes) (Yellow sugar cane aphid), and *Sipha (Rungsia) maydis* Passerini. Although *Sipha flava* is a common in North America, *Sipha maydis*, is new to the nearctic. It is in the *Sipha* subgenus *Rungsia*, of the aphid tribe Siphini, subfamily Chaitophorinae.



*Sipha (Rungsia) maydis* aptera

*Sipha maydis* feeds broadly on grasses and cereal crops, and has been recorded on numerous species over 30 genera of Gramineae (Blackman & Eastop 2006). In the literature, its distribution is Europe, to the middle east, through central Asia, to Pakistan and India; and it occurs in South Africa (Blackman & Eastop 2007). More recently, it is also now in Argentina (Ortego & Difabio 2002).

*Sipha maydis* is able to transmit *cucumovirus* (cucumber mosaic) and *luteovirus* (barley yellow dwarf) (Blackman & Eastop 2000). In drier climates, outside NW Europe, it can be an economically important pest of all cereal crops (Blackman & Eastop 2000). *Sipha maydis* feeds on the upper surfaces of leaf blades near the bases, and sometimes on the stems and inflorescences, where it may be ant attended (Blackman & Eastop 2006). Heavily infested leaves may become yellowed, rolled into tubes and desiccated (Blackman & Eastop 2000).

*Sipha maydis* may be recognized by having apterae that are small, pear-shaped and somewhat dorsoventrally flattened. They are dark brown to nearly black, and fully sclerotized on the dorsum. It has a 5-segmented adult antennae and spinous body setae, both characteristic of *Sipha*, but has a broadly rounded cauda that is characteristic of the subgenus *Rungsia*, instead of the knob-shaped cauda of *Sipha* (*Sipha*). The species also has alates that have a broad dark sclerotic patch on the dorsal abdomen (Blackman & Eastop 2000).

#### References

- Blackman, R.L. & V.F. Eastop. 2000. Aphids on the World's Crops, An Identification and Information Guide. (Second Ed.) John Wiley & Sons, Ltd., Chichester, England. 466 p.
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- Ortego, J. & Difabio, M.E. 2002. Primer registro de *Sipha* (*Rungsia*) *maydis* Passerini 1860 (Hemiptera:Aphididae) potencial plaga de cereales en Argentina. In: Resúmenes XI Jornadas Fitosanitarias Argentinas. 26-28 de Junio. Fac. de Agronomía y Veterinaria, UNRC, Córdoba. 126 p.